Interview with Herbert Daniel Brewster

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

HERBERT DANIEL BREWSTER

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

Initial interview date: December 11, 1991

BREWSTER: By way of introduction the thrust of my career has been primarily on my rather unique background: the role of languages, in my Foreign Service work, the help that this facility gave me, the way the assignments were selected, and then working with the languages I had. It was a career that was a very rewarding one in that I was not out of place at any post; every assignment made very good sense.

Q: Your assignments centered around Greece, Turkey, and NATO. When were you born and where were you born?

BREWSTER: I was born in Salonika, Greece, of missionary parents on December 4, 1917, and lived there until I was thirteen. I began my schooling in a German school, starting with German and Greek in the first grade and French in the fourth grade. It was a small class of eight because the German school had just been permitted to reopen after World War I. There were a couple of Americans, two or three Greeks, and some from the Jewish community in the class. We spoke English at home, but Greek was the lingua franca. At thirteen we came to New York City. I went to the Lincoln Preparatory School of Columbia University and was actually moved forward from the sixth to the eighth grade because the German instruction was so very thorough. The only English that I had had before that

time was a biweekly letter to my grandparents and speaking English at home. My mother never knew when I did speak in a dream whether it was going to be in German, Greek or English; I had the option, depending on whom I was mad at at the time. Then after a sabbatical in the United States, in the Boston area, we returned to Greece...

Q: That was when?

BREWSTER: 1930. I went back for two years to the German school in Athens, moved away before Hitler came in, and went to Athens College for two years. I graduated from Athens College—an American High School in Greece—in the so-called special class, about fifteen Greek Americans who had come out as boarders to learn Greek. All that work was handled in English. It was very good preparation, but I did need a year at Phillips Andover to grow up, round out, and adjust to American life. I graduated at sixteen and a half and so I had a senior prep year at Phillips Andover. That laid the groundwork for a very lucky break of a four year scholarship at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut. The six Olin Scholars had to be selected; regionally and two of them had to be from West of the Mississippi or abroad. In 1935 I doubt whether there were more than three or four candidates for the latter slots. The oral exam, which I dreaded, was rather simple and centered on what the Acropolis looked like. I majored in German and French and was on my way to the University of Bordeaux in June of 1939 for an additional year of study for a master's degree, but war clouds were gathering. So I went to Athens, where my parents were, in August. Suddenly the Germans invaded Poland. September 1, 1939. My father said let's go up to the Legation and you volunteer. So I went up there and they couldn't take on volunteers, but the Ambassador's Special Assistant, Stephen Kalligas, had to go in for basic training and get into uniform so I had forty-five days at the Legation for the munificent pay of $80.00 a month. Stephen came back to his job and I then went to Roberts College in Turkey and taught English for the balance of the school year, until June of 1940, by which time Washington had established a regular clerk's job in Athens. That permitted Cavendish Cannon and Burton Berry to establish the job for me.

Q: Cavendish Cannon was the Ambassador at the time?

BREWSTER: No, both were Second Secretaries. Cavendish Cannon took the most interest in me and sent a telegram to Roberts College saying that the job was open for me, did I want to come? So I took it. I started June 4, 1940, two days after King Constantine was born. I will always remember now when his birthday was. In retrospect, that first year was spent in the code room and the file room and using my Greek. The invasion by the Germans came in the month of April, 1941, and the British were all kicked out at that time.

Q: Who was the Ambassador at that time?

BREWSTER: The Minister was Lincoln MacVeagh, who had been there since he was appointed by Franklin Roosevelt.

Q: What was your impression of how the Embassy viewed the situation? For a while anyway the war was elsewhere, so at that time what was the attitude of the Minister and staff towards the war? Also how did they view the Greek political situation?

BREWSTER: They were conscious, very conscious by the time I got there, of the imminent war and its meaning for Greece. This came on October 28th, the day on which General Metaxas said to the Italians, “No.” They said they were moving into Albania and the Greeks said “No.” The Greek-Albanian war started in earnest that winter. Many soldiers were lost by frostbite that winter, so we were in a war with the hospitals filling up. The Greeks were into it already; it was in a serious situation because they foresaw the Germans coming through Greece later. What the Greeks prided themselves on was having held the Italians up in Albania which threw the timetable off for the Germans to come south through the Balkans, and that affected their timetable on their move vis-a-vis the Soviet Union which carried into that terrible winter.

Q: What was our attitude at the Embassy, was it one of neutrality or one of encouragement?

BREWSTER: We were doing what we could to encourage. Lincoln MacVeagh was a great philhellene; he was close to them, he spoke Greek as a scholar, so we were well clued in. And the Greeks had the natural propensity to come to us. The British and we were the only two nations and they saw the British phasing out, so they were on our doorstep a great deal of the time.

Q: How did we react when the Germans came through, defeated the Yugoslavs and came down? What did the Embassy do?

BREWSTER: The Germans move went through Yugoslavia and arrived at the Greek border April 6, 1941. It took them twenty-two days to make it to Athens and raise the swastika on the Acropolis. With their very fast move through and with the British retreating, we were by that time looking at the job of taking over British interests. It was obvious that we would be doing that as long as we could. It was a hectic wartime period. We burned all of our cables, we disposed of things, that was one of our big chores. The Germans came through. One side-bar on it is that the British left eighty cars down on the beach at Varkiza as they pulled out on the ships. The Embassy had thirteen people and we were able to sequester one car apiece. It was my first vehicle—a 1937 Ford convertible. I did not know how to drive but I got an Embassy driver who helped me learn fast. But that was April 27 and we were closed down by June 10th.

Q: Why were we closed down?

BREWSTER: We were closed down because the United States closed down the Italian Consulate General in Chicago, and the Italians equated Athens with the consulate general. They said, “You do that and we will kick you out.” And so we left. This was six months before Pearl Harbor.

Q: In the meantime, did we have much to do with the German occupying army or the Italian occupiers?

BREWSTER: With the Italians. The Germans went right through and turned over matters to the Italians administratively, so we did have some actions with the Italians at that point. They were the ones who communicated the order to close down; it may have come from Rome. So everybody there—and you had Foy Kohler and George Lewis Jones, both third secretaries; Cavendish Cannon and Burton Berry, Second secretaries; and the staff—went to Rome and then waited for eight weeks for visas to go through the occupied Balkans to Istanbul and Cairo, respectively. Foy Kohler and Lewis Jones went to Cairo; Burton Berry came to Istanbul and opened a listening post there for the Balkans.

Q: Before you left Greece, during the time of the occupation, what was the attitude of the Greeks—you were as close to being a native of Greece as one could possibly be—toward what had happened?

BREWSTER: They were mourning the Greek-Albanian front campaign, which was still going on. There were heavy losses in that battle. You were in a war situation. When the British left many soldiers hid in Greek homes and were around and the Italians were trying to round them up. Many preferred to stay there or didn't get away in time. In fact I was on a trolley one day and because I looked like someone who could very well be a British soldier who had gotten lost, there was someone in the back making signs to me to get off, get off. Finally I did get off, and he came around and said, “They are looking for you; I know that man, he's with the secret police and they are after you”. (They had some Greeks who were working with the other side.) Nothing happened from it, but it was the sort of atmosphere you were in. It was tense.

Q: How well did you feel the Italians were taking hold? How did the Italians and Greeks mesh in this particular part of the occupation?

BREWSTER: Not well, not well. The Greeks couldn't stand the Italians. They had just been fighting them and that was very difficult for them to take. But some Greeks bounce back as long as business is going on; they were putting things away and buying gold and making life liveable. Of course everybody was worried and the subsequent winter was a very bad winter. They had Swedish ships bringing food in because there was real starvation in Greece the winter of '41-'42.

The relations between the Italians and Germans were not good either. I can illustrate that by what I thought was one of Burton Berry's smartest moves. When we got to Rome Burton said, “Come on Dan, let's go back; we've got eight weeks to wait out here and I've got things to do. You come along as my interpreter, and we'll go back to Athens. There is nothing that says we can't go back while we're waiting.” So we went back and stayed at Loring Hall. All we had was Loring Hall of the American School of Classical Studies and the safe there and he set up a consulate. His idea was—we're here, we can at least do consular type work and help people out and show them that we are not really out of it, that we love them and all that. He was a very good person with the Greeks; he also had one of the greatest Greek coin collections to which he wanted to add. Two Italian soldiers came in one day, gun in hand, and one said, “Open that safe.” Burton said, “What do you mean?” and he said, “Open the safe; I'm telling you to open the safe.” Burton told him, “There's nothing in there; we just have some papers in there. It's an American safe and you have no reason to ask that.” “Yes, yes, we want it done.” “I tell you what, go to the German Kommandatura and get the general to sign a document asking me to open the safe and bring that back.” They were never seen again. They were Italians working on their own, throwing their weight around but with no real authority because the Germans had bigger fish to fry. So that was an illustration I think of how the German and Italian relations were not so good. But the Germans went on to Africa, after the big battle of Crete in May 1941, so that's where their interests were. They were fighting people and the others were just left as an administrative backdrop.

Q: The defeat of the British in Crete must have been a terrible blow to all of you, wasn't it?

BREWSTER: Yes, it was. They fought very hard and the Greeks fought very hard there too. They remember that period too.

Q: Then you all took the train and went to...

BREWSTER: We came through the Balkans and ended up in Istanbul, and then I moved to Ankara for fifteen months as a clerk. But they had opened a listening post in Istanbul to cover the Balkans now occupied by the Germans.

Q: There had not been a post in Istanbul before?

BREWSTER: Yes, the post was there; it was converted into a place where the United States had a Romanian desk officer following events from Romania, interviewing Romanian refugees. Lee Metcalfe was there, he did Yugoslavia; I did Greece when I came down with Homer and Margery Davis. He was the president of Athens College who also came to Turkey. So we had three persons on Greece and one each on the other countries. Greece was very heavy because we had to cover Smyrna, or Izmir, as the boats called “Caiques” were coming out that way and a lot of the leaders came through on their way to set up the Greek government in exile in Cairo.

Q: You were in Ankara then for eighteen months or more?

BREWSTER: Just fifteen months and then I moved back to Istanbul.

Q: You were then in Turkey for most of the war. What was the thrust of our policy in Turkey as you saw it during those years?

BREWSTER: Turkey was the big listening post for all. We had a tremendous number of newsmen because it was the country where the planes which struck Ploesti came down. Other US planes also landed in Turkey.

Q: This was an Allied raid on the Ploesti oil fields?

BREWSTER: Yes. Two or three planes got away and the crews came to our Fourth of July party. The Turks were letting them out; they handled neutrality by trying to make everybody happy and were not very strict with it. We had US newspaper men galore; in fact on Pearl Harbor Day twenty-seven of us were out playing softball. Everybody was there; you had representatives on the British side. Von Papen there on the German side, you had one Yugoslav agent who was blown up carrying some bombs right on the main street. There was a lot of intrigue and action. But I was the pouch clerk and the only time I was called down by the Ambassador and his wife was when I forgot to pick the lobsters out of the bottom of the sack and lunch was just about to be served. They had arrived from Istanbul in the morning and I was busy picking out the documents and getting those arranged and didn't realize that there were 2 or 4 or 6 squirming lobsters in the pouch. Mrs. Steinhardt was something else; she called me down. It was a center of intrigue and the Turks were playing the neutral game. But a lot of negotiation had to be done, they didn't give up easily on letting someone be released. Robert Newbegin, Third Secretary was there, Robert Kelly was Counselor, and Joe Satterthwaite, First Secretary.

Q: At some point you moved from being a pouch clerk to being a Vice-Consul, didn't you?

BREWSTER: Yes, that was when I went to Istanbul on January 1, 1943.

Q: What were you doing there?

BREWSTER: I was one of three on this interrogation team for all the Greek visitors coming out. It was a political type job, interviewing the visitors. Homer Davis and Margery stayed in Istanbul and I did the shuttling down to Izmir where I spent a lot of time—that's where

the ships were coming in—reporting on those events. It was the first political reporting job and that is where I got my Vice-Consul title.

Q: What was our particular interest in Greece at that time, 1943-1944?

BREWSTER: I think we saw the handwriting on the wall. We were getting ready to go into Greece, to fly in; we were setting up OSS teams in Naples and Italy. There were a lot of flights in. We were active with the guerillas. I didn't know much about it at the time, but OSS was deeply involved with going in and helping the forces that were trying to fight the Germans and Italians.

Q: As the war came closer to Turkey and was more favorable to the Allied cause, did you notice a change in the Turks as far as how we worked in that area?

BREWSTER: Yes, I think so. They are very shrewd people and I think they could tell how this was going to come out. I think we probably had much better responses to our requests for the release of someone or getting a plane in or being able to supply things for the people who were interned. I don't know how many fellows there were; maybe sixty or eighty came in and were interned.

Q: These were American fliers?

BREWSTER: These were American fliers who came in and the Turks took credit later—I turned out to be Turkish desk officer from 1955-1958: They would say, “What do you mean we didn't participate in the war? We did as much as those damn Greeks did.”

Q: From your interrogation of the people coming out of Greece, did you get some feel for the sharp divisions that were developing in Greece between the right and left wings? And were we blowing warning whistles or taking sides, how were we dealing with it?

BREWSTER: The first two winters it was a question of getting Swedish ships to go in to feed them. We were taking care of the population. The numbers of the guerillas, the

mountain people, were not great. After the December 1944 events when our Embassy team was already back in Greece it was a little early to be taking sides. Later on, we did. General Van Fleet came and the big aim was—let's get these Greek soldiers and officers out of the cities and out there fighting.

Q: But that came later.

BREWSTER: Yes, 1947. In this early stage I did not see any traces of that.

Q: One more thing before we leave Ankara, did you ever have a beautiful spy going after you? You always hear about Istanbul being the spy center. Did you have the feeling that this was a local spy center, with everyone exchanging information?

BREWSTER: Yes, they were great spy centers, though I wasn't involved in it. Although I guess I can say that I had three months of free rent when the agency wanted to have a place in Istanbul that they could use just three hours a week.

Q: Then it was the OSS wasn't it?

BREWSTER: Yes. This was when I first got there and they were glad to let me have it rent free provided I vacated it Wednesday from l:00 to 4:00. So they were doing their work. There was a lot of milling around and I think it is like any big event. When you get thirty-five or forty American newsmen they create a lot of news. They could probably tell some of the best stories of whom they talked to, where Van Papen was sitting when this or that happened, and so on. We were stuck to our desks more.

Q: You came back to Washington when the war was over?

BREWSTER: I came back before that. In the summer of 1944 I had osteomyelitis in my left great toe. I was in a very good hospital, the American hospital in Istanbul, but sulfa just didn't do anything at all. Finally Burton Berry and Lewis Jones, and this was their personal action, wheedled the military out of penicillin; the first penicillin to be shipped out

to a civilian anywhere. It came out to Turkey in a five gallon can with dry ice, was used and cleared it up in four days. But the big story about it was that the Ambassador insisted, because he had never seen penicillin and because he signed the documents for the import of these things, that the five gallon can come up to Ankara first. So it took twenty-four hours longer; instead of it coming into Istanbul directly he wanted to take it out, look into it and send it down. People went wild because they thought “if Brewster dies on your watch you are going to catch hell.”

Q: This was still Steinhardt?

BREWSTER: Lawrence Steinhardt.

Q: He was quite a character, wasn't he?

BREWSTER: Yes.

Q: Obviously you were not directly under his sway, but what was the impression of his method of operation while you were there?

BREWSTER: I had most of my problems there, as all of us did, with his wife who was very difficult. On the policy side, I really didn't see enough of it. He was a political type and we had had Ambassador John Van A. MacMurray who was a professional. People all regretted having this buzz bomb come out of Russia and land there. There were problems for the code clerk. Mrs. Steinhardt had left a few things in the kitchen back in Russia and wanted them back. We called it the “cookie cutter” telegram. If you try to encode a cookie cutter telegram in the Brown Code, saying three spoonfuls of this and so on, you find the code is not designed for that purpose. This thing went on for eighty pages. That is my most vivid memory of the Steinhardt family; that and the lobsters. No, he wasn't popular.

Q: You did come back to Washington then for a rather short stay. What were you doing?

BREWSTER: That was October 1944 and I went to the hospital for a bit. I then was in Foreign Activities Correlation, which was the liaison office with the CIA. Freddy Lyon was the boss of it. I was being groomed to use my German on the search for the German Foreign Office documents. A US-British team of eight people apiece was going to go into Germany after VE-Day and search for the Foreign Office documents.

Q: VE-Day was for Victory in Europe?

BREWSTER: Yes, May 1945. I went over, in convoy, to London with two others in February of 1945; preparing for this event. Then we went to France and into Germany. I spent about three weeks on that assignment. It was interesting, each assigned an armored personnel carrier and a driver; we drove all over Southern Germany to interrogate people who would have known, possibly, where they were put away. The outstanding one I saw was a Karl Haushofer who was a great geopolitician.

Q: Oh yes, the Heartland, or the Crescent Theory—whatever it was.

BREWSTER: He was sitting up south of Munich in a big castle. We chased up to find and interview him about where it was, and didn't get much information. But the two teams did find those documents in the salt mines in August. I was called back on June 1st for my Foreign Service oral exams.

Q: This was to come into the regular foreign service?

BREWSTER: Yes. So I missed out and came back and continued with Foreign Activities Correlation for the rest of that year. Then in March of 1946 I went out for the Greek elections. The team was headed by James Keeley; Bruce Lansdale was on the team and anybody they could gather who spoke Greek. We went out for two weeks and chased around the Greek countryside. On election day I flew in on a little one engine plane ,

landed on a Tripoli road—that is the way two of us were conveyed in—to just stand in at the election booths and watch the voting.

Q: This was of course a very important election; what was your impression of it and the issues?

BREWSTER: The Russians had boycotted the election, they didn't come, the British sent some people in, the French sent a few and we had the bulk of the people and we covered as many outposts as we could. I have to refresh my memory on how it came out.

Q: Well we can add this later. What was the situation in Greece? You had been away for five or six years, you come back and obviously it was devastated economically, but was it a dangerous place to be?

BREWSTER: No. The ground war really hadn't...and the guerrilla war...I was there through all of it and it was not a threat to us in the cities at all. They had had fifteen months of this, things were at peace, they were relieved. Things were going well as far as I could tell.

Q: Even up in the mountainside?

BREWSTER: I don't think that by 1946 it had developed all that much. You didn't have massacres with brothers killing brothers. That came out much more in '47 and '48 because then you were fighting against a Van Fleet and the Greek Army—they were getting the Army people out. And before it had just been sniping.

Q: You went out there with what idea—hoping the democratic side would win? Then what was the other side?

BREWSTER: Well the main side was that the elections would be honest so the Russians could not claim that these were dishonest elections. It was—do you want to chose to be on the Russian side, the communist side, or the democratic side? The Russians did not want to put that up to a vote in which they participated. And we were there primarily to prove to

the world...It was like a small U.N. operation going in, because where our observers saw something going wrong or if someone came up and said, “Hey, I saw him putting in two,” they would go to bat and talk to the election clerk about it, and talk to the judge and so on. You were there as judicial advisors and observers. And the same thing happened on the question of the King. This was March and the other one was in September of '46.

Q: And you were at both of those?

BREWSTER: No, I didn't go to the second.

Q: Then you were assigned to Beirut?

BREWSTER: Beirut for a short while. That was just out of the blue; I stayed only a year. I went out in August of '46 on the ship known as the 'Marine Carp.' It was one of those ships with twelve men in one cabin, twelve women in the other cabin. They were ships that were bringing American citizens back to the United States. Ten or eleven months there, and then despite the fact that people at the Embassy Athens when we went there for Easter 1947 said, “You'll never be assigned here while your parents are still alive; still working here, just forget it.” We suddenly in June of '47 I got a cable URGENT. Brewster transferred to Athens arrive by September 1947.

Q: Just a quick one here. Describe Beirut in 1946 and 1947.

BREWSTER: It was their first independence. It was a beautiful city; Baalbek was a beautiful site to visit. We traveled to Damascus a lot; saw Dean Hinton there, he was just a third secretary.

Q: When the French left that area they had left without any hard feelings?

BREWSTER: None. It was absolute peace and bliss. We just struck it right. Only two things on that side: Daisy Humphrey, a name some people will remember, was a sort of administrative assistant and she just ran the whole business; you went to Daisy for

everything whether you were a first secretary or a clerk. The Ambassador, George Wadsworth, was a great Arabist but he believed in playing golf all day and then coming in and exuding Arabism from 8:00 to 11:00 at night and the secretaries, of course, were called in. But he was a gracious person; he was there for just a short time then Lowell Pinkerton came.

Q: One of those pleasant interludes. And then you went back to Greece, which was fascinating but not an easy time. You served there about three years?

BREWSTER: Five years.

Q: Oh yes, from '47 to '52.

BREWSTER: I came back—and this is one of the side-bars: The Embassy had said, “You're never coming back here, not until your parents retire.” We arrived September of 1947 and I said. “What's my job?” They said, “There isn't any job. We have nothing from Washington saying what you are to do. So you go down...Mike Crosby has just done six months in the visa section, we will give you that job. Learn from Mike in a week and then he can move up into the political section and do that job.” That is where everybody starts, and you had the visa applicants all way round the block at that time. So I broke into my Greek and used that a lot, there were eight or ten Greek staff as support; it was down in the basement of that building. Then I moved to the economics section and John Enepekides was writing prolific dispatches and all I had to do was just look at them, ask him a few questions and edit them and put my signature on them.

Q: He being the local employee, a Greek employee who, as in so many places, knew the scene and did the whole thing?

BREWSTER: Yes, they did they whole thing. Constance Harvey was my immediate boss; there were just two of us in the economic section. I never could have written one of those despatches from scratch; he had the facts and was a first class Greek employee. So that

went on for a year, until on July 1, '49 when the Foreign Service had to dislocate one hundred officers to either USIA or ECA.

Q: ECA was the Economic Cooperation Administration which later became AID?

BREWSTER: Yes. So they offered me Branch Public Affairs Officer to Salonika as one choice, the other was Special Assistant to the ECA Mission Chief, who was John Nuveen. The John Nuveen, The Bond Magnate, himself. I chose John Nuveen; since we were expecting our first child in thirty days and we wanted to stay on in Athens.

Q: Where had you gotten married?

BREWSTER: We were married January, 1946, when I was back here waiting for the Greek elections. We had our doctor all chosen there, so I went with ECA. And that was a very interesting assignment because by 1952, at least, they had two hundred American officers working at the ECA Mission. We were running Greece; we had a weekly meeting with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet every Wednesday at 12:00 where we sat face to face and handled problems directly with the Prime Minister. Anyway it was full control; we were spending two hundred million dollars and we wanted to be sure where it was going. Our directors were very highly qualified people, many of them senior personnel. The whole rice program, for instance, grew up in Anthele. Peasant people said that you could never grow rice. Well, the American technical personnel did it in a small village right up near Lamia where you had enough water. There is a statue honoring Walter Packard now in the village square. You also had a currency control person performing the bank function to be sure that they didn't misspend their aid. The foreign trade administration had seven or eight Americans who were hands on advisors to the Ministry of National Economy.

My job was reading the thirteen Greek newspapers by 8:30 in the morning and sitting in on a briefing for the directors and the whole staff where I could give them the highlights of what they needed to know, and have it done on American basis without having a Greek national do it, where you wouldn't feel so free to discuss “now what do we do about this.”

That was basically the job and I did it three years and then Bill Kontos, who was also on the staff, succeeded me for three years.

Q: During this period of time you were there—and it was a very traumatic time—what was happening on the political-military scene in Greece and how did we view developments there?

BREWSTER: That was handled very much by Van Fleet. The great disappointment of Van Fleet and all his generals and staff was that the Greek Army was a city army. It did not want to get out and really tussle with, or try to suppress, the guerillas. They were having great reluctance getting into battle with them. They were good on the periphery and they would fend off...trying to run into the city, but they would not get out and match up with them. To the military that seemed awful. They attributed it to the fact that Van Fleet did turn things around on that score and so he became the hero of the right wing, and he was conservative himself. One doesn't know—among the Greeks you had the right wing that was glad to be going after these fellows, but there were a lot of Center Union people who could just as well have been on the other side, or might have been if they had been back in their own little village. It was a fight with your conscience a bit as to how hard you clobbered these people and what sort of a war to run against them.

Q: Some of the stories you heard—about the mass deportation of children, if you weren't with us you were against us, the wiping out of small villages by both sides—must have hardened sides up or was it still a matter of debate about far right or far left?

BREWSTER: No, it got to be a very personal thing. With the Greeks if you have lost an uncle you forget what side he's on. He died, he was killed—and I think that things would go very much in terms of “did you lose anybody?, have you lost someone?, is the brother safe?, was the village surrounded?, did our house get burned down?” It was very much which end of the thing you ended on for all these people in the villages. In all those years we were able to travel; the one restriction or one advice was not to travel the coast road

from Corinth back or forth to Athens at night. You might have a raid, because they were back in those mountains and rocks and three or four could come down and stop a car. Not that they would kill you but they were sort of semi-brigands, the ones that got in that close. We still traveled, we traveled less, but we would go down to Mycenaea dunes but we would come back during the day, in the afternoon. Northern Greece had a lot more troubles up there.

There was also a big debate between General Van Fleet and Dwight Griswold, Governor of Nebraska. He was supposed to be the political counselor to Van Fleet. The Embassy was very much “anti” all this accumulation of more generals, more advisors; the Embassy, frankly, also resented the ECA. When you have twenty-two officers and the others have two hundred who are running major issues it leads to jealousies.

Q: Headquarters for these contingents was the Tamlon Building, the Treasury Building, right in the heart of Athens.

BREWSTER: Yes.

Q: I have heard stories of how some Greek politicians at receptions would go up to the ECA head and completely ignore the Ambassador. Most of the time that was who, Henry Grady?

BREWSTER: Yes, and then Jack Peurifoy.

Q: What was your impression of how Henry Grady ran things and how he got along with the American military and the ECA?

BREWSTER: On a confrontational basis, the relations were not good. By the time I got over to the ECA in June of 1949 the ECA was very strong, I don't know that Grady lasted much longer than that because they brought out Peurifoy as a sort of pacifier. You know —”come on out, we can't take this Grady situation much longer.” It was too much power

and too much money being expended, but it saved Greece. A lot of Greeks probably put a good deal of money in their pockets in that period too. I was fortunate in one sense, I went over to the ECA job and they said, “what are you going to classification of your job?” I said, “I am at present an FSO-5, $4500.” “$4500? Oh no! That's not in line with our pay scale. How's $6600? Why don't we just write it up that way?” I said, “All right by me, if you want to give me a temporary raise.”

Q: For the record, there was a very difficult time for some years with the ECA and then AID having a different salary schedule much higher than the Foreign Service scale. Different quarters, better quarters, everything was better; a tremendous amount of friction. It didn't make for a smooth working relationship.

BREWSTER: This probably happened at other posts too. But that led to probably a most interesting assignment. In July of 1952 I went to Paris with the Greeks and the Turks on each side. They were just joining NATO. I had the Greek delegation of eight, the Turkish delegation of eight, and I was the USRO (US Regional Officer) for Greece and Turkey.

Q: I want to get to that but first what about Peurifoy? I have heard in other interviews that he was a hard charger and not universally liked. An operator was sort of the term. I have heard both plus and minus. What was your impression of how he operated in that situation?

BREWSTER: He was a hard charger. He came into a difficult situation and worked at it. Someone right here in the city who can tell you is Norbert Anschutz. He came out as his Deputy Chief of Mission.

He was in the military and knew Peurifoy well. Peurifoy later took him to Thailand with him. Norb is still here, he lost his wife to cancer this summer; he is a very good person. He was competent and an affable type, you could get along with him. The Greeks liked him until he got to playing hardball. John Nuveen was a smooth fellow. He had major problems with the size of their mission; trying to find housing for hundred people and solving the PX

problems. Nuveen himself had the air of a gentleman and was an excellent businessman, but I am sure he could also be stiff or he wouldn't have been brought out to that job.

Q: What was your impression about the Greek relationship here? This relationship in many ways resembles what developed in Vietnam, where if things weren't working out we were taking it over, and this can leave a bitter taste. Maybe we reaped some of that bitterness in later years, in the '70s. Was this at all disturbing or was it just a feeling that the Greeks can't do it, they'll squabble too much, so lets just get on with it?

BREWSTER: The Greeks really appreciated the amounts that were coming in on the economic side and the aid they were getting. They frequently felt “Oh, I know things better than that guy.” But then the Agricultural-Rice, Walter Packard, man came out and really did things going through the ministries, gets down to the local mayor of the town, persuades him and the local agricultural specialists that its possible. But these hands on people got out there. People like Bruce Lansdale from the Farm School at Salonika were great admirers of these people because they really knew their business. They would say, “This can be done,” bring out pictures to prove the point; it got to be like a Point Four program. Much of it was dependent on the project and individuals; if the project was constructive like that I am sure it was very welcome. If it was a question of cutting back and not letting them import another forty Mercedes then they didn't like it. By and large the economy was going along well enough that they appreciated it.Until '56 you really didn't have stability on the political side. Those governments were coming and going about every twelve months: Sophoulis, Tsaldaris. None of them were very good, they brought in all their old cronies. Once 1956 came along and Karamanlis was elected Prime Minister, we phased out on major economic aid. In fact I was there in 1963 and for the seventeenth time we told them “the last $30 million dollars of aid, this is the last.” Ambassador Labouisse told Karamanlis that, but Vice-President Johnson wanted a trip, the one when he visited Iran and Turkey and he came through Greece to tell Karamanlis for the eighteenth time. He came for the meeting at 10:00 in the morning and read from his one page document and Karamanlis across the table responded, “Was that it?”, meaning

did we have to come down or could we have handled this by phone? You don't need to send a Vice-President out to just do that. By that time economic aid was over.

Q: Let's go back to Paris; you were in NATO from 1952 to 1955. What was the relationship between Greece and Turkey that you were dealing with?

BREWSTER: Greece and Turkey were both admitted to NATO in November of 1951. That was the time when NATO was set up in Paris; Lord Ismay, the NATO Council, the whole shebang. We had nine officers who worked with Burke Elbrick and Edwin M. Martin: Martin Hillenbrand was “Mr. Germany;” Joe Scott, Mr. Italy, and so on. I was assigned to the two newest members that came in. The significant part was that they were new boys on the block and not very welcome. The Danes had voted against them, they had to be pulled around. What you were basically doing was having two/thirds of GTI suddenly a part of Europe.

Q: GTI being Greece, Turkey and Iran?

BREWSTER: Which is what we were a part of. It was like saying “You are now Europeans.” They had a time adjusting. They both sent in first class teams to make the best impression on others; it was their first multi-lateral venture. Frequently they would come to us and say, “Well how are you going to vote on this?” “ Tell us what that meant.” “How do you see this as an issue that will affect us?” We were the listening “colleagues” where we could sit down with them and say, “Come on now, don't hold this one up just because of that word. This is what's being achieved.” It was breaking them in. I was assigned primarily because I had been in Turkey and Greece and it made good sense, and I spoke the one language.

Q: I remember many years later I was in Naples talking to a man, in the position you later became political advisor to, saying that really the Greek-Turkish combination was strictly that they were both keeping their eye on the other and that the Soviets were not the prime

concern of either. What was the attitude here in the early '50s; how did our Greek and Turkish representatives look at the mission of NATO?

BREWSTER: They liked it; it was bringing them into a new club and the club was influential countries where you could see people— foreign ministers would come by. It was bringing them in from the outposts. And they weren't mad at each other;, they were both as good as they could be but they didn't have bilateral problems. They didn't have overflight problems and things of that sort in any major way. They sent in their best teams in an effort to impress the other teams, the donor countries, that “we're deserving.”

Q: So they weren't at each other. But this was at the height of the Cold War, the Korean War was not yet over; how did they feel about the Soviet threat?

BREWSTER: The Turks never spoke about it that I can think of, and the others—I think it was just a reflection of their own guerilla war. I don't think they were worried about a Soviet thrust, but they were glad to follow what was being designed for Europe even though they were on the periphery of it: the strengthening that was being done in Germany, the role of Germany, the role of France in it. They were tag-enders; perhaps 10% of the effort was devoted to Greece and Turkey, the big issues were amongst the big countries involved.

Q: Things had not settled down at that time; NATO was still growing, still in its early development stages.

BREWSTER: There were big issues between the Germans and the French, in the rearming of the Germans. That was key.

Q: How did you find your role? You had your two clients there; did you find yourself spending a lot of time with other Americans, and maybe other NATO representatives, acting as the friend in court for the Turks and the Greeks? Explaining their interests and desires to people maybe looking askance at these people from the periphery coming in?

BREWSTER: No, I didn't sense that. In my contacts with them I didn't want to be interpreting what I thought the Greeks wanted. I didn't want to be in the role of an advocate because with a Greek or Turk you never know whether what they are saying is the position or whether they are going to go back and revise it. And then the boss says, “You never should have told them that.” Bingo! There is so much in play on that side. But I was there at their beck and call; had they not come in I wouldn't have been there, that job would not have had to be filled. It came at a very good time and led in to the Turkish desk officer job.

Q: Did you get any feel about how the American circle at NATO felt about France and France's role in NATO?

BREWSTER: I don't have enough...

Q: Well you wouldn't have been focusing on that. Then you came back to Washington for about three years; from 1955 to 1958 you were the Turkish desk officer. What were the main things you did?

BREWSTER: Setting up all of the meetings that the Turkish Embassy wanted in State or with Defense, participating in those, screening the reports from Turkey, the messages and telegrams and so on, answering all of those. The Turks were very polite, very good; they are excellent diplomats in their manner, their suaveness. The Ambassador, and another person, paid attention to us—we had a Deputy Director above us. They know how to go about keeping the desk officer informed and a part of it as if they appreciated your value, your worth. The one difficult thing was the horrendous night in Istanbul when they wiped out a lot of the Greek stores. That was on my watch, just about as I came on board; I don't think I had been there more than a week.

Q: Didn't they attack the Patriarch or something? These weren't Easter riots were they?

BREWSTER: No. It was in the middle of '55. It was what led the Greeks to cut down their community from something like 40,000 to 8,000 in subsequent years. It was just an outrageous riot. Are the historian's books out yet for '55?

Q: I don't know.

BREWSTER: That was the only difficult part. It was basically a normal desk job. (In the case of Greece I was Country Director.) The Turks were responsive to things we asked them to do. I think, but I would have to check it out, that we did ask them to cut the oil off at one point, in the '56 crisis. And they did it.

Q: This was '56; this was the Suez crisis?

BREWSTER: Suez. Again, I would have to dig into that to find out what they did. One thing on the Greek-Turkish thing that I have run into is that the Greeks will not acknowledge that the Turks have ever done anything for the Americans. “They never were at your side.” I took one Greek Vice-President into see our Vice-President and he came right back and said, “Well now, from what I hear they did pretty well in Korea. I understand they were rather outstanding, almost brutal, soldiers on the Korean front, and they saved our neck a number of times with the way they thrust their sixteen hundred men into the thing.”—That's my last memory, forget about World War II. That's something that the Greeks never think of, it's a question of who's done what to whom. The Turks were fierce fighters.

Q: How were the relations between the Greeks and the Turks in those days? With the riots, etc., were you finding yourself sort of the Turkish advocate in NEA as opposed to the Greek one for matters of aid and others like that?

BREWSTER: No. That was one bad case; we were all against the Turks on that one. I put up no defense or anything of that sort. I choose not to say I was Turkish desk officer when I am around Greeks. But I exaggerate because my thesis on economic aid and all that is that in most cases a good handshake and a glass of beer and sitting down with key people

can save you $30 or $50 million dollars if you only explain your reasons. That's why this joining NATO was useful. They were being brought into a big club and they were on their best behavior. That was the time when you could have gotten almost anything from them. So I came off well with the Turks because they all knew me from the work I had done for three years with them. The Turks do not complain; if they have complaints they keep them quiet. The Greeks will operate differently and you are exposed to much more complaining.

Q: We can agree because I spent four years as Consul General in Athens and I found it wearying; I was very glad to leave. Individually I liked the Greeks very much, but I found the constant complaining and accusations of the Americans being behind everything just gets tiresome after awhile.

BREWSTER: And it goes on now. The Macedonia thing; we are to blame for everything.

Q: When you went to Berlin, which was about your only out of area assignment—even in Paris you were dealing with Greek-Turkish relations—what were you doing there? You were there from '59 to '61.

BREWSTER: I was assigned to Berlin in the summer of 1959 as political officer . This assignment was primarily based on the fact that I had S-4 German language efficiency which grew out of my entire training in the early years, as well as at Wesleyan. The assignment itself was not a great success because I was to fill in and work with the Berlin Senate and the officer already there, who was a bilingual German speaker, had made all the best contacts as liaison officer with the Senate for two years and was staying on. So it turned out that I was used primarily as an internal head of the political section, managing a staff of eight who were reporting on a variety of things. We had a large share of incidents in that period just before the wall was put up. These revolved around army people or civilians who got over into the Soviet zone and had to be pulled out with negotiations, and that was one of my tasks. We also had responsibility on a rotation basis for the prison in Berlin, Spandau prison. The extent of the work was one monthly luncheon

with representatives of the four occupying powers. It did give me a chance to see from a distance Rudolf Hess who was the only person there. It was certainly an expensive venture to be carrying on but the Russians were not about to give up on keeping him in custody in those surroundings.

Q: What was the Soviet point in keeping him? By the end of '50 all of the war criminals had either been released or were dead.

BREWSTER: I think it amounted to tokenism, to keep a reminder right in Germany of this person and what he had done. I believe that there were pressures put on, but the French, I think, were a bit on the Russian side on this issue. Anyway, unanimity was not in view in terms of making a change.

Q: What was the situation in Berlin? This is still during the Eisenhower administration with Berlin being this isolated city area in those days. How did we view the situation?

BREWSTER: Each of the occupying powers had a zone;, we had the southwest zone under our command with a military commander, a two-star general, in charge. Our Allen Lightner was his political advisor; the other missions were built up that way. Willy Brandt was at a very strong point at that stage as mayor of Berlin, and there were many close contacts with him.

Q: How easy was it to get around in Berlin in those days? Was it difficult to go from the Soviet zone to the American zone, for example?

BREWSTER: The French and British zones were very accessible, that represented three-quarters of the city. The most beautiful part of the city was in our western zone—the lakes and swimming and all of that. The Soviet side had a fabulous zoo and having children of the age interested in zoos, we did go over; but it was an occasional trip. I don't think I made, on a private basis, more than three or four trips; there was always a chance that they would find some reason for stopping you, saying your license wasn't in order or

something like that, or having the Soviets raise an incident. We were discouraged from going over and it wasn't part of my job. We had an Eastern Affairs section that dealt with the East side of things and they did that work.

Q: The wall went up after you left, didn't it?

BREWSTER: Two weeks after I left.

Q: What was the situation that led up to putting this permanent divide in the city?

BREWSTER: I really don't know on that. I think again that it was their internal way of wanting to divide, saying, “This is ours and you can't come over.”

Q: There was a considerable flow of East Germans into West Germany, wasn't there? Was it fairly easy for them to get across?

BREWSTER: Yes, many came over on the subway; the subway was sort of an around the city subway and they could come over that way. They did get through. I think that may well have been the reason, that the drainage was increasing to the point where they felt it necessary to do that.

Q: Do you remember how you felt about the Soviets at that time? Did you feel that at any time the Soviets might make a move to capture Berlin, or to attack the West? Were we very much on the alert?

BREWSTER: I don't think we were particularly. We were watching their moves but I don't think we felt a threat on that score, any more than people would have in Bonn or other western capitals. We certainly lost no sleep over it; life was very normal with football games, good shops to go to and so on. It was a nice post from that point of view, not one which generated tensions. These events did, and...

Q: Could you go into the events?

BREWSTER: I mean the incidents, because they would call you out at any hour of the day or night coping with that. The military did the coping but they needed the advice from us. But we had enough people to do it. Findley Burns was my boss, and Al Lightner; often those things wouldn't come down to the third level. To sum it up, I sensed that I was a fish out of water there, because you can't make a Berliner out of someone who has never been there before. We had Eleanor Dulles around our neck and she was “Madam Berlin”—she was back here. So you had a group that were Berliners and German experts and “other people.” And I was in the “other” category.

Q: Would you talk a little about Eleanor Dulles? The Berlin issue was sort of her issue and I have heard some people refer to her as sort of wandering around being bothersome rather than really contributing—more meddling than not. What was the feeling toward her?

BREWSTER: She would have an idea or float an idea and she could be difficult about wanting it pushed through and people didn't dare not do it or do it in a sloppy fashion. She did have a vast personal knowledge of things so she had a one-upmanship position by the length of time she had devoted herself to these things. She was back here at the desk, usually.

Q: What had she been doing before her brother became Secretary of State?

BREWSTER: I don't know. She may have been a consultant on German affairs from time to time, or even a middle grade FSR. I am not sure. It was the one time when I felt out of the center of things; and on the personal side I missed a promotion at that time, I was not long overdue, but overdue.

Q: Then you went back to where you were no longer an outsider, but an insider. From '61 to '65 you served in Athens. Did you get your assignment shortened, or did somebody call you?

BREWSTER: No, the Berlin assignment was to be a two year assignment, and it was two years to the day. We didn't extend it one day. By that time, they had done good advanced planning; the Political Counselor in Athens was drawn out to go off as Ambassador to Africa and so they needed a Political Counselor replacement. But they had notice on that. In this case it was amusing because Ellis O. Briggs himself was going as Ambassador, and he came to Berlin to take me down the garden path and find out who this fellow was who knew all about Greece. He just wasn't going to take a pig in a poke. His son was a junior officer in Berlin with four children, the present Ellis Briggs, and so he came to see his son but also made it a point to walk me through the situation, and he accepted me. When we got to Greece we had Ellis Briggs for just five months; he was not very well at the time and he was a great disservice to the relations between Greece and the United States.

Q: He was a man of very strong opinions and got quite a name for himself as being the curmudgeon of the Foreign Service. Here is a personality who in the popular view would strike one as being a person who should really know what diplomacy was all about. Now you saw somebody like that in operation in Greece, could you expand upon that?

BREWSTER: He came with Tapley Bennett as his Deputy Chief of Mission, who had also never been to Greece. The problem, as most people said, was Ellis Briggs had been in Latin America too long; he was someone who took things over—I mean you ran things there. The Greeks were saying, “We're not a little Nicaragua. We're the cradle of democracy; we know about democracy and we know about elections. Don't you tell us what to do.” That was the biggest problem. He just didn't cotton up to the Greeks; they don't like that type of sly “well that's all for today, goodbye” type of approach. They want to be served a cup of coffee whether you want to see the guy or not. They expect to be treated as equals. The biggest issue was: they had elections in October 1961, and Ellis Briggs wanted Karamanlis and the right wing ERE to win and he was open about that. The opposition was George Papandreou. Karamanlis had been in office since '56 and

in Greece the cycles usually are eight years, but the Center Union thought it was high time for them to get in after five years. So they had the elections and it turned out to be close, quite close, with a lot of the military voting en bloc. A very poor election in the eyes of George Papandreou, so he started up a campaign of Via Kai Nothi, meaning rape, or taking over and monkey business—false returns in effect. They got into a high dudgeon on this and it went to the courts. Ellis Briggs then did something that was unwise for any Ambassador, namely he wrote a Christmas letter to the entire American community which started off saying, “Aren't we all glad that Karamanlis won the elections.”

Q: Well here you were, Political Counselor, were you able to step on this, or something like that, or did you know about it?

BREWSTER: I didn't know about the Christmas letter until it appeared.

Q: Oh God, that's such a small community; the Ambassador sneezes and everything is on the front page of the newspaper.

BREWSTER: And this was the wrong time to do it; I don't know who has kept a copy of the letter, but it was not vetted by anyone; it was just his letter. And Tap was a loyal citizen, he had just been brought to wonderful Greece, he wasn't there to go up and say that's crazy, or let me find out whether that's crazy. Anyway Dan Brewster and Monty Stearns had to play the game for three months of trying to educate Ellis Briggs to the fact that some day he would be going on, someday George Papandreou would be in power and we were basically here to be “even Steven,” not to let the Greeks find out that we were those rightists that they always thought we were. This went on...Ambassador Briggs was to leave in February and was to give a farewell party and Monty Stearns and I recommended that George Papandreou be invited to the party. Ellis Briggs said, “Never.” We said, “Just think of our relationships; he may come or he may not come, but you will have done the right thing.” He grunted and groaned but finally did extend the invitation. George Papandreou did not come; George is a proud person, he did not come. At the

country team meeting the following day, Ellis Briggs was gracious enough to say, “I've had forty years of political officers and political counsel and this is the worst I've ever had in forty years.” The Administrative Counselor, Ernest Colantonio, walked out the door with me after the meeting said, “Dan, I may have my troubles with plumbing etc., but I am certainly glad I am not a Political Counselor.

Q: Oh, Ernie Colantonio. I took his place in Naples.

BREWSTER: He's around, I saw him the other day; he came in for a flu shot.

Q: Tell me, what was this thing between Briggs and Papandreou? Was this a chemistry thing or was this his political outlook or was this reflecting American policy? Why did Briggs take this particular course?

BREWSTER: I think the American policy was that Karamanlis had been doing a good job, much had been done since '56. We had a real scare in the election of '58 when the communists, the left, ran up twenty-four percent. CIA tried to scare the bejesus out of us because of that, and warned us things were going downhill. By and large we were well acquainted with Karamanlis, he was a good person. George Papandreou was considered an excellent orator, the greatest since Demosthenes, and also a great opposition leader. He had no idea of how to run things, or organize things; he wasn't made up that way. He was made up to be able to fire pot shots at things and make a nice speech about it, to say things on Cyprus that were vote getters. I think we just felt that it was a stronger team, but we knew inevitably that this would not last.

Q: In other words, from our point of view and to use a good Greek word, a Papandreou regime was not anathema to us? Politics change.

BREWSTER: There has not been one government, if you go through history, that has lasted more than eight years. I had from Markezinis himself, “Don't tell us to vote for ERE or that ERE is the salvation. I am going to vote for the devil next time. Eight years is more

than enough for anyone to be in; then you have got to get another team in and let them get at the trough for awhile." And as we look at it, you chop it off—seven years for the junta, then Karamanlis came in for seven, then the others came in for eight—it comes out that way. The first four they give them the chance, and then the second four they see that they are no damn good and it's time to make a change. Others have come and said, "You have a law that doesn't permit a president to have more than two terms, why are you talking to us about stretching terms out here?"

Q: I take it that with Ellis Briggs you were never able to sit down and really talk about the political situation?

BREWSTER: No. He wasn't interested; Tap did all his talking. He came along and he brought Tap along. I don't think Ellis Briggs was very good at accepting a different view on things. He would rather listen to someone who agreed with him. The next part, which is the important part, is with Henry Labouisse and there the relationship was one of intimate counsel and listening to things.

Q: Ellis Briggs left when, and when did Labouisse come in?

BREWSTER: Ellis Briggs left in February '62 and Labouisse came in the summer of '62, so there was a gap there, and Labouisse stayed until '65.

Q: What was Labouisse's background and how did he operate?

BREWSTER: He had been an ECA Mission Chief in France, and that is where he met his wife, Eve Labouisse (Eve Curie), and they were married there. He had also been head of the Economic Cooperation Administration back in Washington for a very short time. His assignment to Greece, I believe, grew out of some troubles in Washington, some infighting in Washington. He came out and he was just what the Greeks wanted—a cultured person married to an outstanding personage. She was a tremendous asset to him; just to be able to say that they had had cocktails with Eve Curie was what the Greeks loved; she

spoke French. That supplemented Harry. The best thing about Harry Labouisse was that everybody considered him fair and someone ready to listen, not someone shooting from the shoulder with a view; but someone who would listen and learn. He had a wide circle of friends; people were delighted to meet him, he had friends across the board. They were delightful people and he had the southern touch, a relaxed New Orleans touch, and a Princeton education. He by the way went on to be Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the American Farm School for five years and raised $5 million dollars just before he died.

He loved Greece; they both loved Greece. She learned Greek; she used to mark up the Greek papers for him and call things to his attention. They were a wonderful team. He had Tap Bennett as DCM, but he consulted with the political section—Monty Stearns and me—read our things. (Monty left in '64.) Bodosakis, a Greek industrialist, who was there at the time was a close friend of his. Bodosakis's form of entertaining the American Embassy was to have the Ambassador out for a three day cruise once a year in the summertime. He had an 1896 yacht that was barely able to float but he used to invite the Ambassador and his wife, and he invited me each time with my wife Dania. We would just go out to one of the islands.

Q: He was who, the...

BREWSTER: Bodosakis, in his late '70s, was a great industrialist in Greece who owned mines, vineyards, cotton mills and so on. He is a story in himself. Bodosakis gave Athens College about 40 acres of land for their school, for the new grade school. A wealthy man whose wife was not well; a very good friend and knowledgeable about Greece. Harry Labouisse was the best Ambassador I worked with in my 34 years in the Foreign Service.

Q: What about the relationship between Labouisse and Papandreou and the Center Left? You started at a pretty low point—how did this go?

BREWSTER: By November 1963 Papandreou had come close to winning an election. On February 16, 1964 he won the elections, so the Ambassador's feelings was good towards

both Karamanlis and Papandreou. He had a very good idea that Papandreou was going to come into power, and he himself was middle of the road. And the Papandreous were so relieved at having gotten the other man out, well they opened the door to the Americans, and Andreas emerged.

Q: You mean the son, later the Prime Minister?

BREWSTER: Yes. He came to Greece in 1960 but in the first years he was not as active as he was later on. But George Papandreou had no great trust in him. I accompanied Ambassador Labouisse to his villa, which is where he received, and he would talk very openly about things; and once George turned to us and said, “What am I going to do about Andreas, he is causing us so much trouble?” Sort of “have you got any ideas?”

Q: What were the problems of Andreas?

BREWSTER: Power-grabbing; he was already Minister of Coordination. The other politicians didn't like it. Why should this upstart, who was an American married to a Bulgarian, move up so fast? The '64 elections then led on to the junta; the emergence of the junta came out of the fact that the right wing in Greece, the military, did not want to hold the May 1967 elections. They knew Andreas would win.

Q: Oh, it was Andreas?

BREWSTER: I shouldn't put it that way. George didn't die until a year later.

Q: But was Andreas waiting in the wings to step on board?

BREWSTER: Yes, and they didn't want that. This is later: I came with Harry Labouisse to Washington in '64 when we brought the Turkish Prime Minister and the Greek Prime Minister over to Washington on successive weeks to try to get the Cyprus problem solved

once and for all. The Greeks shot the plan down, because Makarios would not accept the solution proposed. The Turks were ready to accept it, but it would have taken negotiation.

Q: In this period of time, from '61 to '65, you have Andreas Papandreou, who was power-grabbing, the son of..., he had been a professor at the University of Minnesota and U.C. Berkeley, and had served in the American Navy and was an American citizen; all of a sudden he comes in and starts free-wheeling, using his father as a platform to go out and alienate people. How about our relationship with him?

BREWSTER: We solved the relationship well at the Embassy in that my contacts were with the Prime Minister, Karamanlis and so on, and Monty's were with Andreas (Monty Stearns in my office). They got to know each other very well; Andreas was a fair economist, but he was not a politician. He didn't know how to deal with his own colleagues, and he was someone who was rising too fast for the likes of anybody else. Look at most Greek deputies and they are between fifty-five and seventy; you don't get to be a Minister unless you are a deputy. The job is to get your hands on a Ministry so that you can deal out some of the money and the cushy jobs...

Q: To build your own coterie. Each one is a political ward boss in a way.

BREWSTER: We have to remember that the entire population of Greece is only a million larger than Chicago, and I think the politics should be compared with those of Chicago. It is small time stuff; it takes thirty thousand votes to get elected. If you are a good gynecologist and deliver a couple of hundred babies you've got yourself the margin to win. Deputies are mostly lawyers and the rest are all gynecologists. But we had a very good relationship. Oh, one other factor that we have to remember is that Karamanlis got in such a fight with the King and Queen over a question of a visit to London that he just bounced out of the country one dark night in late 1963. He went to Paris; just walked away from the government.

Q: And he stayed there until...

BREWSTER: I don't know...

Q: Well he stayed there until 1974, when he came back.

BREWSTER: That was November 7, 1963, when he walked away, and Kanellopoulos then followed as the Prime Minister.

Q: How did all at the Embassy and you personally see the role of the King and Queen, particularly Queen Frederika and King Paul?

BREWSTER: I think the Embassy as a whole, I mean the political side of the Embassy, looked on them as busybodies. It was an odd situation where the Agency did the work with the King and Queen. We didn't in the political section. Undoubtedly the Ambassador knew what was being done but that didn't trickle down. We acknowledged that they would do much better by staying in the background and not trying to get into things. This trip to England—I would have to look up to try to find out what it was. I think it was the King or the Queen who wanted to make the trip and Karamanlis said, “No.” I think it was he who turned her down; that was one of the sort of issues she liked to project herself on. I met her only once, as I remember, up at Anatolia College in 1961; they were coming up to the fair and visited Anatolia College. Everything was set out for them there and I was sent up from Athens to make a little speech on behalf of the Ambassador—greeting them to the College. I did my speech in Greek, unannounced, and as I started off the faces were sort of glazed, people were not focusing; suddenly, “What, what; is this Greek?” Afterwards I sat next to the Queen at lunch in the President's house; her interest at the time was nuclear affairs, how you make a bomb, what you do. She was deeply into atomic energy and that was her hobby; she had gone down to the atomic energy center and had a full briefing on what happens. She used to go into things like that; suddenly she'd like

to become an expert. The son, of course, was quite an expert in sailing. And she ran her daughters too much, she was overbearing.

Q: One of her daughters is now the Queen of Spain?

BREWSTER: Yes, she came through all right. The other daughter was the first person I took around the country as an escort officer here in '69 when I was desk officer. She is a pianist and she was visiting a number of schools of music, met Istomin and others. She was a very fine person, someone who was a human being. We sat down at the Lincoln Center and she turned to me and said, “Mr. Brewster if you would like to go to a movie for a couple of hours I'll be right here. You don't have to sit through this music just because you are escorting me.” She was that sort of human being.

December 19, 1991. Continuation of interview.

Q: How did you see Turkish-Greek relations at that time, between '61 and '65?

BREWSTER: In 1963 and '64 they were tense. I remember there was a crisis on Christmas Day, because I was called into the office, but I would have to refresh my memory on just what the issues were at that time. The Cyprus problem has always been one for the Greek government whoever was in power. No one dared go against Makarios and it would take a great deal of courage for either of the parties at that time, whether ERE or Papandreou's party, to make concessions.

Q: ERE being...how do you spell that?

BREWSTER: Capital ERE, its the National Union Party of Karamanlis; by November '63 Karamanlis had left and Kanellopoulos was the Prime Minister. I remember in the summer of '64 it was the central issue; in June of '64 both the Turkish Prime Minister and the Greek Prime Minister were invited to come to Washington to talk to our government about a solution for the Cyprus problem. The Turkish government, I believe, seemed to

accept the thesis as a possible means of negotiating with the Greeks. When the Greeks came, Ambassador Labouisse was on board the special Presidential plane, I came along; George Papandreou brought his son along as well (that was Andreas Papandreou) and they turned the proposal down. I would have to check out on what the proposal was.

Q: We can always add this as we go. What was the impression at the Embassy, maybe the difference between Briggs and Labouisse but also within the political section, of Makarios and Cyprus?

BREWSTER: Archbishop Makarios, in the view of the political section certainly, very much the thorn in the side of the whole problem. He just was not ready to give in. And the Greeks were not ready to take a solution which Makarios did not agree to. And that is what happened in that instance, the Greek Prime Minister asked for a few days to think it over; they checked with Cyprus and it was Cyprus that turned it down.

Q: Was it our feeling that eventually Cyprus was going to be part of Greece? Or was our feeling that we liked it the way it was, with better relations but keeping Cyprus not a part of Greece?

BREWSTER: I think it was more the idea of finding some solution of federation in which there was an independent Cyprus. The double union, so called, the Enosis, was much more a posture of people like Grivas, who was a general with the armed forces in Cyprus. I think union with Greece by that time was fading; they were not insisting on that they just didn't like the solution that we proposed as to how to set up a federation. A great deal of time had been spent already during that period at talks in Geneva between the Greeks and the Turks on various aspects of the problem. We were not immediate parties to that but the mood was much better in the sense of progress toward a federated solution, one in which there was Cypriot independence but with all the necessary safety valves for the Turkish community within the Greek area.

Q: What was our impression of Grivas? Was Grivas well-connected within the Greek military? Were we concerned that he was an influential figure in the military, with the possibility of a coup?

BREWSTER: This may have been true with the military. He came to Greece only occasionally; we did not see him on those visits. He went to the Greek Pentagon and I think the relationships there were good. I think he was looked upon as a radical even by the Greeks. The Greeks have a great love feeling about Cyprus but they also were aware, I think, at the time, that union with Greece was a very long shot and not one that was essential.

Q: You have talked about Karamanlis and Papandreou, now how about Kanellopoulos? He was the Prime Minister after Karamanlis left, wasn't he?

BREWSTER: Yes, Kanellopoulos was the Prime Minister. George Papandreou won the February 1964 election and and so he became the leader of the opposition at that point. He had been Prime Minister many times; he was a very modest person in the opinion of the Americans. But he had only a short leadership at that time.

Q: How influential did you find the CIA in the country team meetings and as far as the Ambassadors were concerned? AID had faded out by this time and when I was there from 1970 to 1974 the CIA had a pretty weighty role. They were well plugged in because this was the period of the Papadopoulos dictatorship.

BREWSTER: The CIA took on a great role in keeping in good touch with the King, with the royal family. They had one special person who was out with Constantine almost all the time, teaching him judo, teaching him badminton. He was there on almost a daily basis as a “trainer.” They had the close contacts with the King and Queen. On our side it would have been the Ambassador who had those contacts, but we were trying to get them less

involved in the Greek political scene and not more involved so we played a very low-keyed role, especially vis-a-vis the Queen.

Q: You are talking about the Queen Mother?

BREWSTER: Yes, the Queen Mother, Frederika. By way of example the whole episode with Constantine, and Karamanlis, the Prime Minister, leaving for Paris, grew out of an internal rivalry between the Royal household and the Prime Minister's office.

Q: Did you feel that the CIA got too enmeshed in this?

BREWSTER: I am not sure...In a sense they were being informed. I think they loved to send in material; we in the political section did not see the material, it was not vetted, it came back to Washington raw; I have not seen it since. But I think it's more the diary type thing. Laughlin Campbell, who was station chief until he left for Paris in November, was very close to the palace and his successor was too. But we in the political section were not privy to what they were up to; they reported to the Ambassador directly.

Q: How about the military bases? I had the feeling that as far as the NATO contribution of Greece was concerned the real military contribution was the fact that they were real estate. Was this your feeling?

BREWSTER: Yes, that Greece was real estate, valuable real estate.

Q: Yes, for bases and all. Did you find that the fact that we had these bases hidden in Greece—we had units up on the border—was an inhibitor as far as relations went? If we felt that the Greeks were doing something that we wished they wouldn't, say vis-a-vis Cyprus, we were all of sudden having to worry about "if we take to hard a stand it is going to have an influence on our base rights." Was this a problem?

BREWSTER: No, I don't believe that was a problem. There was much more in it for them than there was for us, or it was mutually convenient; Soudha Bay, was one of the prominent NATO bases...

Q: That's on Crete.

BREWSTER: On Crete...and the Marathon establishment as well, the communications center there, was very useful and it helped the economy, frankly. There wasn't a strident voice of “out with the Americans” or “out with NATO” at that time. They were still in a mode of helping, being ready to help on the military front, and they were benefitting both in terms of military aid and vessels and contributions to the military. No, we never felt the threat of that during the period '61 to '65.

Q: What about the Greek-American influence? I want to put it in two parts. One is the group AHEPA, a sort of lobby in the United States; how effective were they, particularly on things like siding with Greece on matters concerning Cyprus or against Turkey?

BREWSTER: I came into that field more as Country Director from 1966 to 1969 when I was back here.

Q: We will talk about that later, but at this time?

BREWSTER: In the field we didn't see a great deal of their work, or their pressures; their influence was basically back here in Washington.

Q: How about the Greek-Americans who worked for the United States government, in our military, in our various programs? It was my impression , again I am talking about the 970 to 1974 period, that we had an inordinate number of Greek-Americans, particularly in the military, because of the language ability. These people also had strong emotional ties to the Greek cause rather than just to the American cause. Did you have that impression or not, or wasn't it such a problem when you were there?

BREWSTER: It wasn't a problem as far as our political section was concerned. Our contacts were with the defense attach#s in the building, in the Embassy itself and not much with the military missions. I was personally aware of the fact that the CIA, particularly, did have a number of Americans but the ones who were really working and influencing things were probably just a handful, five or six. They had Soviet experts there and others as well, so that is why their mission was large. On the other front we had some Greek-Americans out at the bases, at Hellinikon, an air field outside of Athens, and I think in that case their language was probably useful because you get a much better rapport with your Greek counterparts if you can at least talk some Greek. On that score, one reason I was so lucky, in part, getting back to Greece was that I was the only blue-eyed American who spoke bilingual Greek and it did come the easy way by virtue of my being there as a child. The political section did not have a Greek-American officer in that slot until the middle '80's. You had Pete Peterson as Consul-General.

Q: Yes, I took his place. And there it was somewhat pernicious, quite frankly, because he had gotten very close to Patakos who was the number two man in the colonel thing. From what I gather he really showed too much support for, or understanding for, this military dictatorship, which obviously had its reflections in Greek society. It is one of those little things that still lingers on.

BREWSTER: I think, if I can be so bold, you were there at a very special time where the relationships with the Greek military were being handled very differently. I think you have put your finger on a point if your Greek background induces you to want to meet people at a high level and keep up close contacts. That would have never happened in Labouisse's day. You were there in a very special day with an Ambassador who had his own ideas about what was the proper way to deal with the colonels.

Q: This was Henry Tasca.

BREWSTER: Yes. I think he was out of step with many, many people.

Q: One last comment on this particular time. The Greek press has always been a very lively organization to say the least and very strongly political—the truth is not necessarily a major concern. How did you find the Greek press, its importance, and how did we deal with it and how did they deal with us?

BREWSTER: The Greek press back in my time—I think there were fourteen daily newspapers. The Greek way of living is picking one paper that is his paper and then maybe reading one from the other side just to see what they are saying and how wrong they are. Everybody focuses...politicians and you count them, anybody out there, is just tied to his newspaper. That has created many, many problems that we had to cope with in the political section, because they would get so far off base or so excited about a rumor that appeared in one of the papers be it of the right or of the left. They thrived on it; they brought it in and they thought that we had planted the story, they thought that the CIA had planted the story. Difficult! They feel that they are the navel of the world.

Q: What's the term for that, the...

BREWSTER: The omphalos. To them what is in the press is the Bible, and you have a hell of a time persuading them that you didn't write it yourself. It is most exasperating; I had a couple of very exasperating newspaper men. Fortunately we let the press office in USIA handle it and they were off in the Building...

Q: You are talking about the USIA?

BREWSTER: The USIA, yes. They did it well, but in my period, 1961-65, we had a PAO who had been imported by Ambassador Briggs from Latin America, and with a Turkish wife! Three years later they finally asked him to leave, and we relented but there was a certain amount of tugging and pulling. You don't make personnel choices like that, at least in Greece. It is a very influential medium. Now, of course, there is television and they all

have CNN and they are all probably a lot more alert to international events. But at that time the Greek news media were tops.

Q: One name that comes to mind, Helen Vlachos, owner of Kathimerini was very important when I was there, mainly because she represented the closed down opposition paper to the colonels. Were there people who were particularly important that we tried to make see the light at that time?

BREWSTER: Kathimerini is the primary and the other VIMA. Both were papers of very influential persons. We tried to influence them; but they were way above us, they were going to write it as they saw it and it was their view. Eleni Vlashos was particularly sound and represented the center right. Our problems were with individual newsmen who kept pestering us for details. The English language paper, The Athens News, was very difficult. In one period back in 1963 they were getting inside interviews about Greece with the Pentagon back here in Washington, with top generals. American generals who didn't know when to shut up about our nuclear capacity in Greece. They were a bane in our side; we attempted to get the Pentagon to shut down those generals because it was causing a lot of trouble, but no success.

Q: Before we move to your next phase is there anything I may have left out, or any major incident during that time that we may not have covered?

BREWSTER: On the Cyprus issue, although there were more details, the plan was that Cyprus would govern as a federation, and Turkey would have a base, similar to the British base, out on the Karpas point with about 80 square miles. That was going to be it. And that was not accepted because Makarios wanted the whole piece of pie. He was doing it just as a way of showing that “nobody can walk over me.” None of the Greeks, the Papandreou side and the other side, were looking long-range in terms of “do we think we can get anything better than this?” The easiest thing for a Greek to do is to say “No.” It is less staff

work than to work out whether this is a good deal or not a good deal. They don't always staff things out; two or three people make the decision of “no, we don't accept that.”

Q: There isn't the feeling that you negotiate and get to a certain point and say, “well let's go back and we'll look at it,” and everybody disappears and works out what they can do.

BREWSTER: Because we were working with the Archbishop at arm's length, as if he were the Patriarch and you don't touch him. It was a situation like that. And no Greek can go strongly against the Greek church or the ethnicity of Greece.

Q: You came back to Washington and had about a year in Personnel didn't you—placing senior officers? The assignment of senior officers is always a major, almost a religious, exercise within the Foreign Service. What was your impression of how the system worked? This is '65 to '66.

BREWSTER: It was a very small office: Bill Boswell, Phil Burris and myself. I remember the figures: we had 220 Class 1 and 441 Class 2 officers.

Q: These were the old FSO 1 and FSO 2 officer ratings; it is sort of equivalent to a Brigadier and Major General.

BREWSTER: Well technically those classes were almost at SES level. It was difficult to place them at that time because there weren't commensurate jobs, or jobs that really required Class 1 and Class 2 officers. One solution set up during 1965-66 was building up the number of diplomats in residence. We started that with about eight, I think, at the beginning and that's grown. We did have a lot of difficulty and we worked the figures down a bit. Then Bill Boswell came through with one idea which absorbed some thirty senior officers, and that's why I moved out. He decided “let's change the system, instead of having an Assistant Secretary, Deputy Assistant Secretary , and then Office Directors, let's set it up with a Country Director for each country. Each country deserved a Class 1 director because if you give Greece a Class 1 you can't slight Sweden by not giving them

a Class 1, etc." In the long run what happened there was that this step absorbed about twenty-five or thirty persons who were put into this new organizational arrangement.

Q: In a way it is over-layering a bureaucracy, isn't it?

BREWSTER: Yes, but in a way it put more of the action on us. My role when I went on to become Greek Country Director was such that the Embassy called me; the Ambassador still wanted to get in to see the Assistant Secretary but virtually all the relationships were handled at my level rather than as it had been before on a Stuart Rockwell level that was one step above us.

Q: He was Assistant Secretary?

BREWSTER: He was Deputy Assistant Secretary. That was the principal impression of that one.

Q: Who was calling the shots for placement? Was it the centralized personnel system or was it the bureaus that were the greatest influence when push came to shove for assignments?

BREWSTER: I think it was the bureaus at that time; I think it was the bureaus because you went to the Executive Director and tried to persuade him to absorb them.

Q: Did you have any feel for the relative weight, or the competence, or whatever you want to call it, between the various bureaus as far as personnel? I think there has always been the feeling that certain bureaus (I am talking about the geographic bureaus) are somewhat weaker, some tend to get the very best officers; its spotty. Can you give a ranking feel, or a little feel for it at that time?

BREWSTER: I think EUR (European Affairs) has been the luckiest, in that their posts are very desirable, they get people in to their posts; they are supposed to rotate them out and that has been done better in recent years than probably back at that time. I would say that

they probably would have been the ones considered the most desirable in the terms of assignments. It would be hard for me to rank the others.

Q: You finished Personnel, you were there a year, then for a very significant period of time you were Country Director for Greece, from '66 to '69. Could you give me an idea of where Greece fitted into the scheme of things? You were in Near Eastern Affairs weren't you at that time?

BREWSTER: Yes, it was called Near Eastern Affairs; Greece, Turkey and Iran had been the Office (GTI). With our country directorship we reported to Lucius Battle who was our Assistant Secretary of Near East Affairs, which included Greece, Turkey and Iran, and Stuart Rockwell was his Deputy at that time.

Q: How did you feel at that time, and those around you, about Greece being fitted into the Near East? Did it make more sense as far as dealing with it than having it in Europe, which it became a part of in 1974?

BREWSTER: Because of the amount of aid they were getting, military aid, both Greece and Turkey, they were two very special countries. Greece is much more, I think, a part of the Western picture than Turkey. I think one reason that it was maintained in that area was that the whole question of Congressional relations vis-a-vis the military aid question had been handled for years in that office and the people who were cognizant about it were in NEA. Kissinger reportedly changed it on a trip he took to Europe. He was on his way to Athens and saw a new control officer come on board for him, and a new person to meet, and said, “Why is this, Greece is part of Europe. As soon as we get back remind me to change this around, we'll put Greece and Turkey into EUR.” The CIA apparently had had Greece and Turkey in their European division before. That supposedly is the story of when it happened, and as you say it was about 1974.

Q: It was within a couple of months of the Cyprus blowup and that caused a certain amount of confusion. Obviously the situation was rapidly changing while you were there.

Could you give me a feel for the difference between Political Counselor in Athens and Greek Desk Officer? Was there a different vantage point, did you have a different view of Greek-American affairs?

BREWSTER: The assignments overseas were all very useful for when I took over on the job. But the lessons learned from being on the desk was how much work is involved which is internal, fighting the Defense Department, doing work with the other agencies here, and how little time is really spent on reading anything like an airgram that came from the posts. We kept up to date on it but the work was over 80% chairing meetings, trying to explain why we were doing things and why State Department wanted to maintain its legal position on Greek matters. What I learned abroad and the experience I had had helped on that sort of thing because the Defense Department, particularly, was very, very stubborn on a number of issues.

Q: What were the major issues on which you were having trouble with the Defense Department?

BREWSTER: I am sort of a year ahead of myself in this sense, that it mainly came to the crunch at the time the junta came in.

Q: Let's talk about before the junta, and then we will come back to that.

BREWSTER: I don't recall any major events with Defense in those first six months. The outstanding thing, my outstanding memory, was going out to Greece on a familiarization tour, the first time I had been there since '65. That was in early February, 1967. There were elections coming up on May 21st and I was there with my notebook going around from politician to politician asking, “Now what do you think the percentages are. Is Papandreou going to be able to maintain his lead and stay in power or will there be a comeback from Kanellopoulos and the others?” And the answer I got, and it was a major surprise, from many politicians was, “What elections? What are you talking election for?”

Q: There was a scheduled election?

BREWSTER: Yes..."That's never going to take place. We are not going to let it take place." The feeling of giving more power, it was bluntly put, to—as they looked at it—Andreas Papandreou, the son of George Papandreou (George was getting very old at that time), or letting him win an election was anathema to them. That should have given more of a signal to us as to "What is the alternative?" They'd say, "Something will happen, God will take over. Don't ask." It was a revelation, looked at ex post facto of course, of a coup of some sort. It was true that as of December-January rumors were up that some higher level Greek generals might be tempted to pull a coup rather than have an election.

Q: They were expecting a general's coup and it really ended up as a colonel's coup?

BREWSTER: That was what we went through anticipating, but from our point of view we were not clued into the Papadopoulos scene.

Q: Here you went and you got everybody questioning this...In the first place who was the Ambassador and the Political Counselor when you went back?

BREWSTER: Phil Talbot was the Ambassador at that time; Phillips Talbot had been Assistant Secretary for NEA for a number of years and this was his first post in Greece. The Political Counselor, Kay Bracken, had aspired to the DCM job and didn't get it. Roswell McClelland was the DCM later but he didn't know much about the Greek scene.

Q: It does not sound as if you had an overly experienced Embassy as far as the peculiar problems of Greece were concerned and the storm clouds were gathering. What were the feelings toward Papandreou, from the American point of view? Did we feel that George was going out and Andreas would cause us real trouble or was it just another one of those things we would live with?

BREWSTER: We didn't buy the idea that this was that dangerous, that holding elections would make that much difference at the time. We were ready to work, as we had since 1964, with George Papandreou and with Andreas. But the Greeks on the right were very, very concerned. Going back—we did have one good expert; the DCM that came on board was Norbert Anschutz and he was there the night of the coup. So there wasn't a big gap in knowledge. Do you want to hear about the night it happened?

Q: Well first, how did we view the government? As you say the Papandreou government was not an impossible government and its continuation was not an impossible thing.

BREWSTER: So we took it much more calmly. These reports about “it will never take place” seemed far fetched to us because we didn't sense, and hadn't had reporting come through, reflecting this view. They were trying to impress Washington; when the Greek politician gets his chance to talk to the Country Director he feels he is getting right into Washington, rather than having someone at the post perhaps accept it, or perhaps distort it, or not write it up at all. So they were hitting me on this story.

Q: Did you feel that there was a tendency, because you were the expert from out of town coming in, to over-dramatize the situation to make an impression on you?

BREWSTER: Yes, that happens; but I was surprised that there was more than one person. Either this story was out or they were passing it around and beginning to believe it. It came from several sources and I was interested because you wonder why it had not been reported if this was already going around the block.

Q: This was not coming through the reporting?

BREWSTER: This hadn't come through the reporting yet.

Q: Do you know why? Were they more open with you?

BREWSTER: It may have been that they were more open and I was more impressed with it. In any Embassy it is what the political section or the DCM and the Ambassador think is worthy of reporting that goes out. Now on the other hand our confreres, the CIA, may have been sending in this sort of report.

Q: But you were not getting any emanations of this in Washington?

BREWSTER: Not at that time.

Q: How about from the military, from the Department of Defense people? They were supposedly the Defense Intelligence Agency, the attach#s, and would have been closer to the military, and if the military was as unhappy as all hell that should have been coming through.

BREWSTER: We hadn't gotten it from that source; and now that you point it up, the rapport between Defense and State wasn't one that included trading information of that sort on reports. It could have been better, I suppose.

Q: Greece is a world of its own. I wonder if you could describe how, as this is going to be rather important when we get up to the coup and how it is received. What was your impression of how the Ambassador operated and understood the scene, and how he was accepted by the Greeks and the Greek staff?

BREWSTER: My only impression is from the visit I took in February, trying to get a feeling about it there. Phillips Talbot was a good working Ambassador but he didn't fit in with the Greek type of mentality, but this was perhaps too short a time to make a judgment of that sort in terms of the operation. Then he soon moved into the junta period.

Q: You came back here then, you had been out there in February. The rumors were going around that the Generals weren't going to allow this, and the big surprise was that the wrong people "couped." (This, of course, is the people talking about this after the coup had

happened.) You were sitting in Washington and getting closer to April 21, 1967; were you then beginning to hear talk about "the generals may do something?"

BREWSTER: Yes, that had gotten through. But people felt, I think, that they knew the generals well enough that they would find out about it, or they couldn't get away with it or could be talked out of it.

Q: We were getting wind of this, we stand for democratic ideals; were we making any effort within the State Department to pass the word on through our Ambassador, through the Secretary of State, and the Department of Defense through their attach# system, telling these military people "don't do it—we don't go along with this"?

BREWSTER: Oh yes, that was being done; that was being done by the Ambassador on instructions from us.

Q: We were saying "don't coup"?

BREWSTER: Yes, oh yes.

Q: How about your relations with the Department of Defense? Sometimes the Ambassador can say something but if all the military equipment is coming from the Department of Defense, and that is a good portion of what concerns any military man in a country dependent upon us for supplies, and if they get a wink or a shoulder shrug from our military establishment in Greece they aren't going to do anything. Do you feel the Department of Defense was on board with our policy, making it known?

BREWSTER: Yes. I think a distinction for that period, and this may have been because of the way the situation worked, is that we had good close relations with the Defense Attach#, the Air Attach#, the people who were in our own building. We did not have as good contacts with CIA, and they as much as said "we are letting the Ambassador know whatever we pick up, and that's what the book says." All of us were much more worried

about what went on at that level than on the DIA side. So we didn't have occasion to question them as to whether they were getting more information on that front.

Q: You were in NEA; NEA spends most of its time worrying about the Israelis and the Arabs and when it is not doing that it is worried about the Indians and the Pakistanis. Greece must be pretty far down as far as sustained interest, particularly in those days, wasn't it?

BREWSTER: Yes, that was the case. At that time all the people picked up countries and there were Country Directors for Iran, Iraq, etc., and you had a lot of new people on board as a result. You have a point, and that is what I am saying about Phil Talbot. His knowledge had been so broad that probably only 5% of his time was devoted to Greece before he went out to Greece. It was one of these appointments that was being made for presidential reasons and so he went less well equipped than others might have; but he was a pro and a good person.

Q: At the eve of the coup, could you describe what your attitude was, how things went, reactions and whatever you have to say.

BREWSTER: I have gone over this with a number of Greek visitors and parliamentarians, and others, because we were accused of having pulled the coup ourselves. They would say, “the CIA maybe did it too but you were responsible, you knew better;, if you can't keep control over your CIA you are not doing a very good job.” I describe to them the situation that night. I was out at a dinner party and got the call from upstairs, SS, that there was trouble, come right on in. So I went in, and I called in my two assistants at that time, and they both came in; we set up a three person task force right away in our own office. The one message that we had was a telegram from Ambassador Phillips Talbot saying, “I have just seen the nephew of Prime Minister Kanellopoulos who wants me to come urgently to his apartment. Am proceeding.” Then he went to see Kanellopoulos there and stayed about an hour and a half; this was two o'clock in the morning their time. When I got on the

desk and had that message, I wondered whether the other people had heard or whether their phones had all been cut off, because the first thing people do is cut communications around town and sure enough they had. So there was difficulty in communicating but we were able to call Norbert Anschutz, the DCM, Jack Maury, the CIA Director there, and a couple of other officers who then made their way into the Embassy at 3:00 in the morning. George Papadopoulos was not a name known to the desk; the CIA had known him but this emerged later. The first day was devoted largely to the moving of troops about and utilizing the control of the radio and the TV for their messages and announcements. One thing that was significant was that by afternoon, when the Greek populace understood that this was a coup on the right and not on the left, there was a considerable sigh of relief. The business sector particularly. We were in touch with them and they got the message back in and on the following morning I went up to see Secretary Dean Rusk to report on the events. He asked me, as I entered, to wait a few minutes, and when I began my presentation he interrupted me and said, “Mr. Brewster, don't get so excited; this is my ninety-first coup.” I said, “This is different, the cradle of democracy.” That didn't impress particularly. The rest of the day was spent primarily working immediately with the Defense Department on a position that would cut off 90% of the military aid shipments. And that was achieved; the military went along even though we had a hard time getting 90% as against the 50% they wanted to stick with. Actually shipments in the pipeline take a long time to go out so it is not something one senses immediately but at least it was something that could be used on the radio and Voice of America, etc. But the cut off of international news, I think, was considerable, was pretty watertight; the Greek people didn't hear very much. Certainly many people that I have seen since that time were unaware that any of this had happened because the colonels weren't going to put it out. If it did go out it was on BBC or something that was in passing which certainly never reached the Greek press or the Greek people. So that was the scenery for that particular time.

Q: Were you getting any feeling from the military or the CIA that “'thank God, these are people we can work with”?

BREWSTER: No, that didn't come out very fast, not at the beginning. Our biggest job was catching hell from Congressmen, the press; inquiries as to what was going on, why hadn't we done things. It was questions from our own public arena as the days went on. You know they took Andreas in and locked him up and we spent more time on trying to get Andreas out of jail than we did on policy. It was the detailed events that we had. That 90% figure stuck until the fall of 1968 when the Russians invaded Czechoslovakia.

Q: So it was about a year and a half?

BREWSTER: It was a year and a half. Then the Defense Department went to 50% on the aid.

Q: This coup particularly stirred the liberal element in the United States. It was very popular to be against the coup. How did this impact on what you were doing?

BREWSTER: The three of us, and we didn't increase the staff, had a lot of detailed work to do. This is my first impression of it: we didn't have time to sit down and write policy papers about it, we were putting out fires all the time. Very loud protests and others that were coming also from the Greek politicians who thought we had a hand in it.

Q: You are talking about the politicians in Greece?

BREWSTER: Yes. The one thing that many people want to do is to get the monkey off their back and on to somebody else's back. More people came in with ideas such as “why didn't you take that Sixth Fleet ship that was down in the harbor, turn it around, and just shoot and hit the Greek Pentagon in Athens,” and other ideas equally silly. And the press like Helene Vlachos, and other papers, were all viciously against us for not having done something about it. Most of them were closed down I think...

Q: Some of them got away to London and other places.

BREWSTER: Yes. Helene Vlachos went to London.

Q: There were a considerable number of Congressmen and politicians in local areas and influential people who had Greek roots. Probably next to those with Jewish roots the Greeks may be the next in terms of political influence. How did they respond?

BREWSTER: You make a good point on that. Most of them are liberal and they were among the loudest voices, the so-called Greek lobby people; but there were also many, many professors all around the country who had been following these political events before they happened and who also got on the bandwagon of “what can we do?” “how can we get them out?” and so on. The year and a half spent with that government was one of being attacked constantly as to “you're not doing enough to get this situation changed.”

Q: Again, I have to speak from my experience in Greece. As you were saying the Greeks have a very, very strong tendency to blame others for whatever problems they have and to feel that no matter what happens it is never their fault; it has to be an outside influence and invariably it is the United States in present politics. But did you see anything that could have been done to change things around, anything that the United States considered or could have done that it didn't do that might have changed things at any point along the way?

BREWSTER: No, because we were trying to keep hands off on the political scene, not run elections or get involved on this. We were ready to take George Papandreou if he won the elections or Kanellopoulos if his side won in the elections. We were playing a passive role; they were a good member of NATO, the bases were valuable. I don't think they were affected much after the first few weeks in terms of their ability to carry out missions. It was more the human rights aspect of it, the democratic rights that were at issue that we were coping with primarily. No I wouldn't say there was anything; we knew that the generals might have come up, we used all our influence in terms of telling them “no, this is not the

answer; coups are not the way to go, you are a member of NATO" etc., etc. I presume that they took heed of it but along came this undercover upstart type and he just ran the ball.

Q: Did the White House play any role in this, or were they too absorbed in Vietnam?

BREWSTER: No, they didn't. It ended up with the Secretary, and I think that on that day, if my memory is correct, Dean Rusk was going off to Brussels anyway, so we didn't have much time. We were going to see him a week later for the next time.

Q: I gather that despite all the criticism the Secretary never got terribly engaged in this?

BREWSTER: No, he didn't. He left things to Luke Battle, who was the Assistant Secretary; it was handled that way.

Q: Of course we were the one country with bases, but did you find that you were taking a lot of heat from the other countries in Europe? The British, French, and Germans were sort of playing holier than thou on this relationship. Did you find that a problem?

BREWSTER: No. Back here, frankly, we didn't have much contact with the Embassies on these things. In the field I am sure they were sorting things out, but no one was about to go to war over trying to get these fellows out. Business resumed pretty fast so it wasn't the world's greatest crisis. But so many Greeks have come away from Greece to get away from what they consider a government that is too monolithic or too tight; many of them are liberals, many of them are professors or others that read a great deal about Greece and who also read Greek newspapers and keep up with things that way. It's a free country, you can call in and get the desk officer or the country director, we don't care who it is. We consulted a great deal during that whole period with...I'll try to remember his name—one of the professors who was here at American University for a long time. Theodore Kouloumbis who has written a good book on Greece and NATO, it was published just about that time, 1967 or so.If I can move on, here is a bit on the question of Andreas, because people ask us sometimes, "What is it that makes you or the world so unhappy about Andreas

Papandreou as he has come along ?" Andreas Papandreou was captured and locked up in jail. Much time and effort was devoted to obtaining his release. Even though that took some eight months, everything was done to permit Margaret Papandreou, his wife and an American citizen, to see him, to deliver his meals, to pay visits to him. In other words we did as much as possible at the Embassy level in terms of dealing with the humanitarian side of his jail sentence. However, when Andreas Papandreou was released to go to Canada as a professor, in late 1968, and paid a visit to Washington, he visited with the Assistant Secretary of State Luke Battle; he was very, very bitter at the lack of Embassy action in pressing for his prompt release. There was no concept of a word of thank you. You know—"I'm back; I'm out." This is very typical of Andreas, he is in there for himself and he does not think of how other people view him at times. This has been very much the base of his position and his wife's position that has led strident anti-American campaigns which built him up as champion of the Greek left-of-center PASOK. This stand continued in the 1970's, after the fall of the junta, and throughout the 1980's.

In 1969 I was assigned as political advisor to Admiral Rivero in Naples. Admiral Horacio Rivero had been Vice- Chief of the Navy Staff before that assignment and was really a brilliant strategist. One of my tasks on the assignment was to try to keep the military presence in Greece and the military visits to Greece at a minimum so that the junta would not make use of these visits and exploit them to the extent possible. He was broad-minded enough to understand that theme and to go along with it. This didn't mean that Washington generals and others didn't creep in, but he was very astute and played the game. We took three trips to Greece in the twenty-four months I was assigned there. It was sad in one sense to see the reaction of the politicians whom I had known well, who in that situation deliberately moved over to the other side of the street in order not to be seen with me, or to shake my hand or greet me. I may have taken that more personally than I should have, but it was a reflection of how even some of the more sensible people still thought that we were to blame, and who have to keep up that image that the US bears the responsibility of this event. It would have been counter to their thesis that we were playing with the

colonels. The most difficult thing, was when I was still Country Director, was the decision of Agnew, former Vice-President Agnew, to visit Greece.

Q: This was in the '70's.

BREWSTER: Was this in the '70's? When you were there?

Q: He visited there; I had lunch with him with the rest of the Embassy. This was about '71 or something like that.

BREWSTER: Your dates would be right on it. But I remember that there was a fight I lost with the White House, with his Staff Assistant who was counting on making the trip too. Any memoranda of protest did nothing to change his mind; he wasn't going to change it. There was a very visible person, the Vice President was worth six or eight generals, at any time; and he was exploited.

Q: And later a decision was made, around '72 or '73, for recruiting purposes of the navy to home port a carrier group in Greece. It was practically the whole Embassy waving the fleet away, "Don't come here!" And they did, and there was trouble, and eventually it never happened.

BREWSTER: They never got in.

Q: But the colonels were delighted to have them. While you were dealing with this, and also as POLAD in Naples which covered Greece, how well did you feel that the Embassy was keeping people abreast of what was happening, and connected? The Papadopoulos regime was not easy to approach and we didn't want to get close to them, and being shunned by the Greek politicians for their own internal purposes must have left the Embassy somewhat isolated.

BREWSTER: It is interesting that you raise that point because I don't remember seeing messages from Greece, from the Embassy, much during that period. I'd heard by word

of mouth what Ambassador Tasca's stance was on relationships with the junta. We may have seen some messages, but not many. That was Admiral Rivero's only comment I shall always remember. He had a photographic memory, could read all his messages, so he wanted no summaries, which made my job quite easy. He'd take the whole take and let me read it, and then read it over himself. And he did read a lot of messages, particularly from Moscow. At times he would sign off over on page six of a long Moscow message saying, “Don't tell me they really believe this stuff, Dan.” Which was an indication of how congenial you can be in Moscow, or hopeful about things. It was a reflection of Admiral Rivero that was sort of a dig—”You softies, hasn't anybody got any guts?”, something like that. One trip he did not take me on, was to Madrid where he engaged himself to be the next Ambassador to Madrid. He talked to El Caudillo, eyeball to eyeball and in their own language, and Franco got in touch with the President and said I want him as my next Ambassador. And he went out. He was the class of 1932 at the Naval Academy, the first Puerto Rican, and number one in his class of 204. A remarkable guy. Apparently the first year he had the flu at Christmas time and wasn't able to take an exam with all the rest; the others took it and they were ranked. Then he took the test and came out ahead of the number one. So they put him down as “Mr. One-half.” He was remembered as Mr. One-half. He stood five foot four. A great person.

My last two years or three years was in Atomic Energy and there is nothing worthwhile to report, it was just a finale. In 1971 I had turned down Thessaloniki as Consul-General, and then turned down Belgrade as DCM because it was the worst time for the drug situation, and I wanted to be back home in Washington with a fourteen year old daughter rather than put her in boarding school. I had thirty-five great years in the Foreign Service.

Q: Dan, this has been fascinating. I want to thank you very much. I really appreciate this.

BREWSTER: P.S. I was very fortunate indeed to have had an interviewer who served as US Consul General at the Embassy, Athens from 1970-74 and was very well versed in the Greek political scene.

End of interview